



## GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

<b>Faculty</b>	Journalism and Media Communications
<b>Programme Title</b>	BAJVM
<b>Programme Level</b>	Level 8
<b>Module Title</b>	Media Studies
<b>Module Lecturer(s)</b>	
<b>Room</b>	
<b>Time</b>	
<b>Module aim</b>	The aim of this module is to introduce students to what Media Studies actually is. During the module students will look at a variety of media and related issues and how they can be interpreted and understood. It will look at how the media is studied and how as media users we consume its various forms and products.
<b>Module description</b>	The module will consist of lectures and tutorials over a 12 week period and will include screenings of relevant documentaries that will highlight issues relating to the topics being studied.

### Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module students will:

1. To distinguish between different types of media organisations / outlets
2. To analyse the way in which various media operate in the wider society
3. To develop an understanding of the reasons why various media organizations operate in the way they do
4. To examine in detail how issues are covered in the media and analyse the motives / reasons behind their presentation
5. To illustrate the different methods various forms of media use in their delivery of news / information / entertainment
6. Compare and contrast the successfulness of media organisations and how this can be undertaken

### Delivery Methods

Lecturing	3 Hour(s) per week
Tutorial	2 Hour(s) per week
Independent directed reading and research:	3 Hour(s) per week
Module Length	12 weeks

<b>Assessment Strategy</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Exam	60%
Assignment 1	20%
Assignment 2	20%

### **1 Reality Television**

What is Reality TV, and where did it come from? Clear definitions will be examined as well aiming to show that what we understand as Reality TV is simply a title given to a particular genre of programming and ignores other examples that could be defined in a similar manner. There will be an examination of how objective such shows are and why they have been successful.

Issues relating to how real some shows are, and how producers of such show manipulate the content to increase the entertainment value at the expense of the authenticity of what is being presented.

The question of whether Reality TV is in decline, having lost its impact will be investigated. This topic will also explore the conflict between entertainment and privacy issues and how such shows have an effect on those involved.

### **2 Radical / Reactionary / Resistance Media**

This subject will follow on from the previous topic asking how and why media organisations outside the mainstream have grown in number and influence. This topic will investigate how they are organised, their decision-making processes and their agenda, perceived or otherwise.

This topic will look at various international examples as well as those based in Ireland. The history, motives, methods, success in getting information to wider audience and political slant of such movements/organisations will all be examined. The issue of why such organisations have evolved in opposition to the mainstream media will also be addressed.

### **3 Whistleblowers**

The position the whistleblower has filled has been vital in the work of investigative journalism for over a hundred years. Living in an open and free democracy should mean that those willing to expose corruption should be praised and protected, but this is not always the case. This topic will look at the importance of whistleblowers in exposing the actions of state and corporate misconduct or criminal actions. It will also look at a number of high profile examples of whistleblowers, internationally and nationally, what they exposed and how they were ultimately treated.

We will examine the correct procedure for the journalists when dealing with whistleblowers, and how such action is becoming increasingly difficult.

### **4 The Power of Satirical Comedy**

What is satire and how can it be defined in the modern media landscape? Is it still relevant? This topic will address the meaning of satire as well as its influence and power across a range of genres.

From examples of satirical film and television to magazines and websites, including animation and cartoons this topic will look to assess to what degree varying forms of satire work, both successfully and unsuccessfully.

We will look at historical as well as contemporary examples, written as well as visual in an attempt to determine whether the ridicule or denouncing of individuals or institutions can actually make a difference.

### **Module Reading List**

*Challenging The News* – Susan Forde

*Globalisation of the News* – Oliver Boyd Barrett  
*Media & Globalisation* – Nancy Morris & Silvio Waisboard  
*Media Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences* - David Croteau & William Hoynes  
*The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media* - John B. Thompson  
*Reality TV* – Anita Biressi & Heather Nunn  
*Project Censored Guide to Independent Media & Activism* – Edited Peter Phillips  
*Big Brother International* – Ernest Mathijs and Janet Jones  
*Radical Media* – John DH Downing  
*Reality TV* – Institute of Ideas  
*An Army of Davids* - Glenn Reynolds  
*We The Media: Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People* – Dan Gilmour

The lecturer will also provide students with relevant handouts and screenings during module

	<b>Syllabus Topics and Theories</b>
<b>1.</b>	<u>Film Noir 1: Pre-history and origins</u> ; Artistic heritage; Expressionism; European influences; Screening: <i>Double Indemnity</i> ; Wilder; 1944
<b>2.</b>	<u>Film Noir 2: Form</u> ; Post-war Hollywood genres– ‘Social-Consciousness’ film – the ‘new society’ – post-war disenchantment - Screening: <i>The Big Heat</i> ; Lang; 1953
<b>3.</b>	<u>Film Noir 3: Content</u> ; Cold War ‘angst’ – urban paranoia –power and corruption – the Witch-Hunt and the Blacklist – House un-American Activities Committee – Screening: <i>Out of the Past</i> ; Tourneur;1947
<b>4.</b>	<u>Film Noir 4: Ideology</u> ; Ideology in narrative; semiotics, narrative and textual analysis; genre study; generic conventions; gender representation; <i>femme fatale</i> ; gender dynamics Screening: <i>Touch of Evil</i> ; Welles; 1958
<b>5.</b>	<u>Documentary 1: The Documentary form</u> – theory of and origins – authorship - ‘the creative treatment of actuality’ – Robert Flaherty - John Grierson and British Documentary Film Movement – Romanticism; Screening: <i>Man of Aran</i> ; Flaherty; 1934
<b>6.</b>	<u>Documentary 2: Cinema Verite</u> ; naturalism; representation; Vertov’s <i>Kino-Pravda</i> ; aesthetics, free cinema; direct cinema; notions of truth and reality; boundaries of reality and fiction; Screening: <i>Man with a Movie Camera</i> ; Vertov; 1929
	<u>Documentary 3: Modern documentary</u> – narrative shifts and directorial influences –

7.	re-enactment – Direct cinema —minorities – representation of history – questions of fate, destiny and redemption Screening: <i>Grizzly Man</i> ; Herzog; 2005
8.	<u>Documentary 4:</u> Objectivism vs. perspectivism; freedom of media; alternative voices; war and propaganda; narration, invention and history; ‘reality television’; death, identity and society Screening: <i>The Thin Blue Line</i> ; Morris; 1988
9.	<u>Contemporary Television Drama 1:</u> Reception theory and reader response criticism; reading the television text; the ‘active’ viewer and television effects; television and ideology of mass culture; depictions of the ‘American city’; realism; institutional dysfunction; Screening: <i>The Wire</i> ; HBO; 2002
10.	<u>Contemporary Television Drama 2:</u> Political storytelling; political discourses; addressing ‘elites’; popular culture and politics; TV fiction vs Washington reality; television and feminism; patriarchy in drama and reality; Screening: <i>The West Wing</i> ; NBC; 1999
11.	<u>Contemporary Television Drama 3:</u> Television as manipulation or fascination; consumption and pleasure; television between reality and fiction; the function of characters; the nuclear family and the crime family; intertextuality ( references to <i>The Godfather</i> and popular culture within the series); Screening: <i>The Sopranos</i> ; HBO; 1999
12.	<u>Contemporary Television Drama 4:</u> Television genre conventions; alienation, social mobility and ruthlessness; plot exposition; moral and thematic standpoints; seriality and narrative arcs; social issues, style and presentation; Screening: <i>Mad Men</i> ; AMC; 2007.

### ***Module Reading List***

#### Essential Reading

Film Noir Reader  
Silver and Ursini (ed)  
Limelight Editions 2003  
2003

In a Lonely Street  
Film Noir, Genre and Masculinity  
Frank Krutnik  
Routledge 1999

Hollywood Genres  
Thomas Schatz  
McGraw Hill 1981

Film Theory Goes to the Movies  
Collins; Radner; Collins (eds)  
Routledge 1993

Understanding Television

Andrew Goodwin (ed)  
Routledge 1990

The Television Studies Reader  
Allen and Hill (eds)  
Routledge 2004  
Channels of Discourse, Reassembled  
Robert Allen (ed)  
Routledge 1992

Television in the Antenna Age  
Robert J Thompson  
Blackwell 2005

Making Sense of Television:  
The Psychology of Audience Interpretation  
Sonia Livingstone  
Routledge 1998

Reading the Sopranos  
David Lavery  
I.B. Tauris 2006

This Thing of Ours: Investigating the Sopranos  
David Lavery (ed)  
Wallflower Press 2002

The Sopranos and Philosophy  
Greene and Vernezze (eds)  
Open Court 2004

The West Wing:  
The American Presidency in Television Drama  
Rollins and O'Connor (eds)  
Syracuse Press 2003

The Documentary Film Movement: An Anthology  
Ian Aitkin  
Edinburgh Univ Press 1998

Documentary Film Classics  
William Rothman  
Cambridge UNiv Press 1997

New Challenges for Documentary  
Rosenthal and Corner (eds)  
Manchester Univ Press 2005

Supplementary Reading

Film Genre 2000: New Critical Essays  
Wheeler W. Dixon  
SUNY Press, 2000

Investigating Couples: A Critical Analysis of The Thin Man, The Avengers, and The X-Files  
Tom Soter  
Published by McFarland, 2002

Moving Pictures: A New Theory of Film Genres, Feelings, and Cognition  
Torben Grodal, Torben Kragh Grodal  
Oxford University Press, 1997

Nixon at the Movies: A Book about Belief  
Mark Feeney  
Edition: illustrated  
University of Chicago Press, 2004  
Thrillers  
Martin Rubin  
Cambridge University Press, 1999

Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film  
Michael Ryan, Douglas Kellner  
Indiana University Press, 1990

Visions of Empire: Political Imagery in Contemporary American Film  
Stephen Prince  
Greenwood Publishing Group, 1992



**GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN**

**Journalism and Media Communications  
ASSIGNMENT TITLE SHEET**

Course:	BA Hons. in Journalism and Visual Media
Stage/Year:	1
Module:	Media Studies
Semester:	Semester II
Assignment Number:	2nd
Assignment Deadline:	

**Assignment Title**

*“The major period of (film) noir production is usually taken to run from The Maltese Falcon in 1941 to Touch of Evil in 1958”. Describe the major stylistic characteristics of the cycle paying particular attention to moral ambiguity, the noir ‘look’, gender, violence, and the city.*

The assignment will take the form of a 2000 word essay. It should be provided in typed format, referenced and show all relevant documents / books used during research in the bibliography. A filmography indicating students viewing will also be provided.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will be required to:  
learn and conduct research into Film Noir  
illustrate a close understanding of the components of Film Noir  
demonstrate a knowledge of cinematic and directorial technique  
develop students cine-literacy and ability to critique and evaluate media texts

**Assessment Criteria**

The assignment should be submitted in a clear and presentable manner. The content of the essay should outline and examine the key components of the question and present a clear understanding of the material. Students should incorporate appropriate class readings as well as their own independent observations of key examples of Film Noir to address the essay title.

**All late assignments must be signed in to the Faculty Office during office hours. All late assignments are penalised as per Faculty regulations.**



## GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

### Journalism and Media Communications ASSIGNMENT TITLE SHEET

Course:	BA Hons. in Journalism and Visual Media
Stage/Year:	I
Module:	Media Studies
Semester:	Semester II
Assignment Number:	1st
Assignment Deadline:	

#### Assignment Title

**Discuss the various factors that contribute to the continued popularity of Reality TV.**

In your answer outline the reasons why this genre of television continues to remain prominent in television schedules. Provide examples of Reality TV programming that highlights the various elements that have maintained the genre's viewing figures.

OR

**Outline the characteristics of Reality TV that call into question the realism of what is being portrayed.**

In your answer provide examples of the methods used by Reality TV shows to enhance the entertainment value at the expense of capturing reality.

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The assignment will take the form of a 1500 word essay relating to one or more of the topics covered in the opening weeks of the module. It should be provided in typed format, referenced and show all relevant documents / books used during research in the bibliography.

#### Learning Outcomes

Students will be required to distinguish between different types of media and analyse the way in which they operate in the wider society. To show an ability to evaluate the means, motives and reasons of how such media operate and offer relevant comparisons and contrasts between their means of delivery.

#### Assessment Criteria

The assignment should be submitted in a clear and presentable manner. The content of the essay should outline and examine the key components of the question and present a clear understanding of the material. Contemporary examples should be provided to support any assessment and analysis.

**All late assignments must be signed in to the Faculty Office during office hours. All late assignments are penalised as per Faculty regulations.**